

A *94*
VINDICATION
OF
Human Liberty.

IN TWO PARTS.

- I. With Respect to the *Mind's* being *Passive* in *Sensation, Reflection, Memory* and the *last Judgment of the Understanding.*
II. In Regard to God's *Prescience.*

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INTRODUCTION.

THE Doctrine of *Predestination*, or of the eternal Purpose of God, to create a certain Number of the human Species for endless Happiness, and a certain Number to endure eternal Misery, as the Objects of his Hatred, prevail'd so much amongst the first Reformers, that it became an Article of Faith; and some were so strongly attach'd to it, and so intemperate in their Zeal, as to represent the Father of Mercies in effect as the most cruel Tyrant, who takes Pleasure in the Misery of his Creatures: They have most uncharitably asserted, that he decreed the greatest Number of Mankind eternally to undergo the most exquisite Torments our Imaginations can paint, for no other Purpose than to shew his Almighty Power in them.

Predestination, view'd in this Light, appear'd so horrible and shocking to most considerate, thinking Men, that some Moderns have endeavour'd

vour'd at a Reformation, and to make such Alterations as might suit better with the moral Goodness of the divine Being. Their Hypothesis is this, *That all created Beings always were, and always shall be, under an absolute Necessity to do what they do ; but that they are not culpable for any of their Actions, (if they may properly be call'd Actions) the whole being agreeable to the Design and Intentions of the first Cause.*

The first of these Opinions is too monstrous to gain ground, and has been sufficiently confuted already ; but, as refin'd upon, is not so easily answer'd : Yet, as it may be said of the first, which seems to be the Product of an extravagant Zeal for the Doctrine of Election, that it can serve no other Purpose than to make Men mad ; so may it likewise of the latter, that it can only make them careless of what they do : For this Hypothesis not only denies the Existence, but even destroys the very Idea of Virtue, of real Virtue, which is *the making Choice of, and producing such Actions as are agreeable to Morality, or the general Good.*

But, if we are not Agents (properly speaking,) but Patients, and can in reality produce no Actions at all ; if we have no Power, to apply and habituate ourselves to such Actions and Pursuits, as are fittest to raise us to the highest Perfection our Natures are capable of ; and if every Man at all times necessarily does that one Thing, and no other, which is proper for him to do ; then all Distinctions of Virtue and Vice, of moral Good and Evil, are mere empty Sounds ; all Men must be equally good, and all equally answer the End of their Being, and all Actions are equally good ; and whatever hard Names we may frequently give to Thieves, Murderers, &c. they answer the Design of their infinite Author, and only act the Part he has allotted them on the Stage of the Universe : Therefore,

Necessi-

Necessity, as it is generally understood and used, may be said to be an eternal, absolute, and unalterable Law, by which all the Cogitations, and Motions of every finite Being were preordain'd and limited; so as that no one Action, that has been, could have happen'd otherwise, or in any other Manner, than it has, nor any future Action can be; but the precise Manner, and all the Particulars relating thereto, were thereby fix'd and determin'd. For Example: It has been determin'd, that, about once in six or seven Weeks, in London, a certain Number of Persons should steal, commit Murder, or other Crimes, (so called;) should be taken, brought to Trial, and a certain Number condemn'd to Death, and executed, a certain Number transported, and a certain Number whipt; and that they were brought into Being for this very End, but are in reality no more criminal, than the Persons who suffer'd by their Outrages, or their Judges themselves.

It is proper now to say something of Liberty, and explain it in the Sense I understand it; and this seems the more necessary, because it has been defin'd by several learned Men, who have writ in Defence of it very differently, and oftentimes in so equivocal a Manner, that the *Necessitarians* have made use of those very Definitions, to prove their own Cause.

By Liberty then I understand, *That Power in an intelligent Being, by which it is able voluntarily to produce or begin Motion or Action.*

The Difference therefore between a necessary Agent, and a real one, is very Evident; the one only Acting, as it is acted upon, and constrain'd to move; the other having Power in itself to begin Motion, or produce Action; and this is the Ground of the Difference in Acti-

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ons, and our accounting them good or vicious, and blaming or praising the Agent.

There can be no Danger then, in our embracing the Doctrine of Liberty, or free Agency; for our believing ourselves real Agents, and accountable Creatures, though we may be deceiv'd, and act by Necessity, can be of no ill Consequence, either to ourselves, or any other Being. But, supposing we are free Agents, and fly to the Doctrine of Necessity, to account for the Unfitness of our Actions; and to calm our Minds, and soften the Guilt, naturally arising from the Actions themselves, we put a miserable Cheat upon ourselves; every one may easily perceive what dreadful Effects it may produce, to the entire Destruction of Morality.

I shall consider this Subject,

First, With Respect to the *Mind's* being *passive*; and

Secondly, In Regard to God's *Prescience*.

P A R T I.

Of Human Liberty, with Respect to the Mind's being passive.

THE Patrons of Necessity assert, that the Soul is passive,

- I. *In Sensation*, or the Perception of its Ideas.
- II. *In Reflection*, or the Faculty of Reviewing its own Operations.
- III. *In Memory*, or the Treasuring-up and Retaining its Ideas.
- IV. *In Reasoning* and *Judging*, or in Comparing its Ideas, and Discovering the similar and

and unlike Parts, their Agreement or Disagreement, and in Assenting to, or Dissenting from, the Truth or Falshood of any Proposition; or the Fitness or Unfitness of any Action in View.

Now the Soul, they say, being thus passive in all its different Modes of Consciousness, the Will is necessarily exerted, and consequently the Action resulting is necessarily produc'd.

I. *With respect to the first Proposition, that the Soul is passive in the Perception of its Ideas.* 'Tis true, in the Perception of all simple Ideas, and perhaps in several compound Ideas; especially those of Substances; as, *those of a Flower, a Leaf, a Tree, &c.* In which Case, the Mind receives the compound Idea by the Senses, and must receive it as it appears; but then Mankind generally agree in these Ideas; For where do we meet with a Man in his Senses, that calls *a Flower, a Tree* seriously? But there is another kind of Ideas, on which most Part of our Reasoning depends, and indeed all relating to Morality; for without them we could have no Idea of any such thing; and they seem rather to be the Creatures of the Understanding, and form'd by it, viz. such as *Liberty, Necessity, Wisdom, Goodness, &c.* and in these Men differ widely, and make the same Sounds stand for Ideas, as unlike almost as any one Thing can be to another. For Instance, ask one Man, *What Faith is?* He will answer, *An absolute Submission to the Doctrines of the Church,* and receive for Truth whatever he is taught by the Clergy, or spiritual Guides of his Community: Another shall signify by that Term, the Adhering to that Side where Probability is strongest, after a careful Examination of the Object, or Matter in View. In a Word, what one calls *Justice*, another calls *Cruelty; Persecution*.

tion is term'd wholsome *Severity*; *Reformation* in Religion, *Heresy*; and *Loyalty*, *Treason*. Now, if the Mind was absolutely passive in obtaining these Ideas, why are they so different in different Men? If it be alledg'd, that the Difference of Capacities or Education may be the Occasion: This might have some Weight, if they were also the Occasion at any Time of Men's Differing in the Ideas before mention'd, which we all agree are impos'd upon us. Besides, how comes it that we are generally so hard put to it, to give a true Definition of the Words belonging to Ideas of this Nature, notwithstanding we talk of 'em every Day? Nay, the same Person, by turning into his own Mind, and diligently observing all the component Parts of such Ideas, as those of Liberty or Necessity, shall be able to give a true Definition of them: But perhaps take him sometime after, and he shall not immediately be able to do it, till he has again weigh'd and consider'd, what properly belongs to those Ideas.

Again, these Ideas have no real Essences to be referr'd to, but what is in the Mind only; and consequently they must be either made by the Mind, or be inspir'd: For when I mention the word Cruelty, by which I understand, the making some Being undergo a greater Degree of Pain, than is reasonable or just, is it necessary that I should see this done, to have the Idea? No; the Ideas of Pain, of Inflicting that Pain, and going beyond the Bounds of Reason and Justice being united, give me as perfect an Idea of Cruelty, as if the Action was perform'd before me, and indeed much more perfectly; for, I might behold many Actions or Distributions of Punishments, without being able to give Judgment, whether they belong to Justice or Cruelty, till I
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had settled the Boundaries of these Ideas in my own Mind to refer to. In this Circumstance, therefore, of moral Ideas, or moral Essences, it seems much more probable, that the Soul, or Mind, is active then passive. It appears, at least, to be as active as the Body can be suppos'd to be, in running, walking, leaping, or any other Exercise that is generally attributed to it.

II. III. *The Soul's being passive in reflecting and remembring* is as inconclusive: But, as the Point in debate does not evidently depend on this, as our being constrained or necessitated, to reflect and remember, would be no positive Proof of our being *Patients* in all Things, I will proceed to the fourth and main Proposition, viz.

IV. *That the Soul is passive, in reasoning and judging, in comparing its Ideas, and discovering the similar and unlike Parts, their Agreement or Disagreement, and in assenting to, or dissenting from the Truth or Falshood of any Proposition, or the Fitness or Unfitness of any Action in View; and that the Soul being thus passive in all its different Modes of Consciousness, the Will is necessarily exerted, and consequently the Action resulting, is necessarily produc'd.*

1. And, in the first Place, I would ask, whether in the very Definition of Reasoning, or the Power of the Soul in comparing its Ideas, and discovering the similar and unlike Parts, &c, Action is not imply'd? It is hardly in the Power of Language, to express our Thoughts in favour of Necessity, without frequent Contradictions. For here our Thoughts naturally contradict one another. One while, we assert, reason, prove, refute, &c. Another while, we neither do, nor can do any thing. At one Time we are zealous for Truth,

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and blame others for not assenting to what we call so: But, in the next Breath, we declare ourselves utterly incapable of finding out either Truth or Falshood: Nor does it signify any thing to us, whether we are always in the Right, or always in the Wrong, we being always in our Duty. These Contradictions, naturally attending the Doctrine of Necessity, are no small Presumption of its Falsity. And indeed, that Man, who will deny the Soul to be active, in demonstrating a Proposition in *Euclid*, resolving an Equation, or forming a fine Piece of Poetry, had he not the Art to come off by Means of necessary Agency, (which in reality is Nonsense) would oftner be laugh'd at then reason'd with.

2. It must be granted, that in all Subjects which admit of Demonstration, the Soul, when it perceives such Demonstration must come to a Period in its Searches, and passively admit such Demonstration; *that* being the *Ultimatum* of all Enquiry, and the Perception of Truth itself, so far as it reaches, which must necessarily appear as it is; so as the Soul can't conceive it in any other Manner then as it is. For whatever arrives at Demonstration, is irresistible and certain; and Propositions of this kind, are generally more speculative than practical; and principally fitted for Meditation. But those Principles, from which Action, or what we call Action, flows; rarely discover the Consequences of the Action in view, with equal Clearness and Conviction. So that 'tis hard to judge, whether the Mind has always fully examin'd, and faithfully concluded on what is proper to be done, before it is exerted into Action; which, in my Opinion, is the best Excuse we can make for falling into those Actions we call evil; tho' it shews at the same Time, we ought to take the utmost Care, and weigh and examine Actions with perfect Sincerity.

3. And

3. And here, 'tis proper to observe, that the Words *Good and Evil*, have generally been confus'dly and equivocally us'd by Writers on this Subject, viz. Sometimes in a moral Sense, and ascrib'd to such Actions as relate to the general Benefit; sometimes to what the Agent apprehends, at the time of Action, may be most conducive to his peculiar Pleasure or Satisfaction, without Regard to any other Being. And, from confounding these two Views or Motives, have positively asserted, that no one Man ever did any thing, but for the best; that is, either what was morally good and just, or what he lik'd best. And truly, it would be almost impossible to imagine, any Persons acting, without any Regard, either to himself or any other Being or Thing in the Universe. But, it is not always the moral Fitness of an Action in view, that occasions the Commission of that Action. And as to a selfish Fitness only, the very Dispute is, whether or no *we ought* (that is, *are constrain'd*) to be govern'd by it? Suppose, for Example; a Master of a Vessel ready to put to Sea, and upon mature Deliberation, thinks it best, both for the Security of himself and Owners, to insure and accordingly does insure. So far, he can't be blamed as unjust or Immoral: But, if he insures twice the Value of his Vessel, and takes the first proper Opportunity to sink her, for the Lucre of what he has insur'd, 'tis not difficult to judge of such an Action; almost every Man of common Sense will readily declare this to be unjust and wicked: And 'tis almost impossible for the Person himself, not to perceive the Dishonesty of it, even in the very Heat of Action. But that he is necessitated to pursue his avaritious Views, has never yet been prov'd.

4. What may therefore principally be insisted upon is, *that the grand Motives to Action, are Pleasure and Pain, or Happiness and Misery: And that the Creature is so form'd, as necessarily to pursue what it takes to be conducive to its own Pleasure or Advantage, whether it is agreeable to moral Good or not.* To which I answer, that this Necessity must either proceed from something foreign to our selves, or something of and belonging to our selves; but in this Case it is suppos'd to be from something belonging to us, *viz.* our own Judgment of Things, and our own Resolutions to put in Practice, either what is best, or what we like best. Our Actions are therefore our own, and proceed from ourselves. And to say, a Man necessitates himself, to perform such or such a Thing, is in other Words to say a Man resolves and acts such or such a Thing. Again, 'tis impossible to conceive, how we should Act without Will or Desire. And this is the very Reason that has occasion'd some to conclude, *that we are absolutely necessitated by Desire:* Which is as just, as to suppose, that because a Man cannot see without his Eyes, his Eyes necessitate him to see, whereas every one knows, he has a Power to shut 'em if he pleases. In both Cases the Man appears to be the Agent, and to act from Powers and Principles in himself.

5. This kind of Necessity will even reach the Deity: And indeed the Patrons of Necessity sometimes exclude Agency (properly so called) in God himself; at other times they allow him to be an Agent, and the only Agent in the Universe; and withal tell us, that "our Knowledge
' is too imperfect to account for the Manner in
' which the Deity acts: And to affirm, that be-
' cause our Actions are determin'd by the last
' Judgment, and consequently Necessary, that
' his

‘his are so too, is no just Consequence.’ But, with Submission, to suppose eternal Truths to us, not to be eternal Truths to him, is to suppose ‘em not to be eternal Truths at all. We are indeed convinc’d, that infinite Wisdom can perceive all the several Relations of Things at one intuitive View, without the trouble of comparing Ideas, and proceeding by Steps, and a long Train of Reasoning, as we do. But notwithstanding this, Perception in him, is *Perception*, as well as in us: Tho’ his Perception is in an infinite, ours in a finite Degree. He must also perceive the Fitness of an Action when he puts it in Execution, and judge it proper to be done; or we must suppose the Origin of all Reason to be irrational. It appears therefore, that the Consciousness of the Deity is as necessary as ours, that he is as passive, as much necessitated to see Things *as they are*, as we are to see them *as they appear to us*. And if it be impossible for us to act agreeable to our Perceptions and Judgment of Things, without being necessitated, it will also be impossible for him. And, as to the Manner in which he acts, it does not concern the Question, any more than does our Ignorance, how material Objects affect our Senses, and paint those Images in the Mind which we have by Sensation.

6. This leads me to take notice of what the Author of the *Enquiry concerning human Liberty* hath alledg’d, from the late Bishop of Sarum, to prove God a necessary Agent. He tells us, ‘That by the Force of Truth, that learned Prelate grants, that infinite Perfection excludes successive Thoughts in God: And therefore, that the Essence of God is one perfect Thought, in which he views, and wills all Things; and tho’ his transient Acts, such as Creation, Providence, and Miracles, are done in a Succession of Time; yet
his

' his immanent Acts, his Knowledge and his De-
 ' crees, are one with his Essence.' And again,
 ' The immanent Acts of God being suppos'd free,
 ' it is not easy to imagine how they should be one
 ' with the divine Essence; to which necessary Ex-
 ' istence does most certainly belong. And, if the
 ' immanent Acts of God are necessary, then the
 ' transient must be so likewise, as being the cer-
 ' tain Effects of his immanent Acts; and a Chain
 ' of necessary Fate must run through the whole
 ' Order of Things: And God himself then is
 ' no free Agent, but acts by a Necessity of Na-
 ' ture.'

This Way of Reasoning is to me really myste-
 rious; but if this learned Prelate intended to be
 understood, that the *physical Essence of God* was
 one perfect Thought; or that his Knowledge or
 his Decrees were the same with his *physical Essence*,
 I must confess I can't agree with him. For to
 confound Action; whether immanent or transient,
 with the Essence of the Agent, is what I don't un-
 derstand. Let us rather suppose that he would be
 understood, that they had the same infinite Dura-
 tion, and that the eternal Existence of the divine
 Being, supposes the eternal Existence of immanent
 Acts; or that the eternal Being always had
 Knowledge, and a View of the Order of his Pro-
 vidence. But whatever *he* meant, I think *we* mean
 no more by necessary Existence, than an Existence
 from Eternity of *himself*, without any other Cause;
 and I can't see how this at all proves God to be
 a necessary Agent, or any Thing like it. For his
 Decrees, or the Acts of Volition, which were in
 him from Eternity, respecting his transient Acts,
 such as Creation, Providence, &c, were absolutely
 Acts of Power in himself, and proceeding from
 his own *physical Essence*: And he had at all Times
 the same *physical Power* to produce any of those
 transient

transient Acts, as he had when they were produc'd. The Times, or Portions of Duration, in which they were actually produc'd, were his own Choice, directed by his infinite Wisdom. Therefore, to suppose him a necessary Agent, is to suppose he necessitates himself; which, as I have already observ'd, is only an absurd Way of acknowledging his Agency, and his being free or without Constraint, in the most perfect Manner we can imagine. All the Difficulty, I apprehend, proceeds from confounding *physical* and *absolute Necessity*, with what some call *moral Necessity*; which is only a figurative Way of speaking, and is in reality no Necessity at all. For *morally speaking*, we say it is, and always was, impossible for God to deviate in Action, from his own perfect Idea of infinite Wisdom and Goodness; which is no more than to say, *he could not act contrary to his own Judgment and Will*; for if he was to act contrary to his Judgment and Will, he would be necessitated. His Liberty therefore consists in having an uncontrollable Power in himself, to do at all Times whatever he pleases or thinks proper; and moral Necessity is only a figurative Name for Liberty.

There are some who carry this Point still further, even to the *Denial of Creation and Providence*; and with great Confidence affirm, *that there has been an equal Quantity of Motion from Eternity; that all Beings, or Species of Beings, have necessarily existed, and necessarily mov'd and acted from Eternity*. And for Proof alledge, that a Body in Motion can't lose that Motion without communicating it to another, or others; nor can any Body at rest receive Motion, or, if in Motion, increase that Motion, but what is communicated by another, or others: So that what Motion is lost by one Body, is only transferr'd to another, and consequent.

sequently, the Quantity of Motion must remain equal; and that Motion, or Rest, being indifferent to all Bodies, it is as easy to conceive Motion to exist from Eternity, as that all Things were originally at rest.

1. This can be true only in relation to dull inactive Matter, which is indifferent either to Motion or Rest, and can neither of itself, put itself into Motion, nor, when put into Motion, deprive itself of it; but does not at all answer to the Motions of living Creatures, who to all Appearance, move themselves contrary to the known Laws of Motion: For, according to the Laws of Motion, no *Body*, of itself, can change its Direction; which however is as common to Animals as their moving at all. As it has hitherto been beyond the Skill of the sagest Philosophers to explain their Motions, and adapt them to, or bring them under, any mechanical Rule; so I may venture to say, without the Spirit of Prophecy, no better Reason will ever be given, for any one's moving one Hand rather than the other, but his *own single and powerful Will*. Here is a kind of Motion therefore, which may increase or lessen, according to the Will of the Creature, or as the Creatures are increas'd or diminish'd in Number. For, I believe, it will hardly be question'd, that there was a considerable less Quantity of Motion, *after the Battle of Blenheim*, than *in the Heat of Action*: Besides, we can't conceive how this Kind of Motion, can possibly be without a Mover, or real Agent somewhere; for if we existed from Eternity, we also mov'd and acted from Eternity.

2. With respect to Existence; we can't conceive how any Being that exists necessarily, can ever cease to exist. For a Being that is self-existent and eternal, as it can owe its Existence to nothing but its own eternal Nature, must exist to Eternity.

It

It is absurd to imagine, a Being naturally eternal, and also subject to Dissolution; to be eternal *a parte ante*, and not *a parte post*. But this must be the Case with us, if we suppose an eternal Succession, or rather eternal Existence; for the whole Species, and every individual, must exist in some Manner or other from Eternity, or we must suppose frequent Creations. Shall we then, who are subject to Casualties and Death, imagine we existed from Eternity? Besides, self or necessary Existence, supposes no foreign Means necessary to preserve and continue such a Being: But the Want of our daily Bread, and other Necessaries, ought to be sufficient Proofs of our Dependency; that we came not into Being without Creation, and that we are preserv'd by some other Power than what we have in ourselves. For us therefore, to lay claim to an eternal Genealogy, can no ways be accounted for, but from an unconquerable Obstinacy, in persisting in our own Opinions.

3. It is alledg'd, in Favour of this Notion, that we can have as clear an Idea of an infinite Succession of our own Species, as we can of an infinite Succession of fleeting Portions of Duration; unless we can have an Idea of a Time when it was impossible for such a Species of Beings to exist.

We may not perhaps be able to give a better Answer, or set any other Time, than *before we were created*. And I defy any one to give any tolerable Reason for our Existence at all, but Creation only. Nor is it conceivable to us, as has been before observ'd, how, or for what Reason we should be subject to Death, if we were self-existent. That we should continue an infinite Number of Years with so small a Degree of Life, that we can't remember one single Sensation, and, at last, like *Jonas's Gourd*, come to the Perfection we seem in-

tended for in a few Moments ; which having no sooner arriv'd at, but we perish and die. Our whole Species, and all Animals, may be destroy'd ; and 'tis generally believ'd, will come to a Period one Time or other. But 'tis not so with Duration ; which changes not, but will continue its Youth to Eternity. The very Reason why we are satisfy'd that it is infinite, is, the Impossibility to imagine it could ever have a Beginning, or should ever have an End. I might further add, that the Progress of Arts and Sciences, of Navigation, the late Discovery of the useful Art of Printing, &c. will not admit us to suppose an infinite Succession, without manifest Violation to our Reason.

4. If an infinite Succession, and consequently the eternal Existence of all Things be suppos'd, it will follow ;

That either all Animals were from Eternity in *Animalculæ*, or that a Pair, at least, of each Kind were in their perfect Growth, and contain'd all the Rest of their Species: But this would be to suppose a first Age, and destroy the whole Scheme.

And if they were all in *Animalculæ*, it will be hard to judge, how they ever came to the full Growth of Animals. To allow them a Power of Generation is contrary to Nature, and more than we allow (in our own Species) to Children even at ten Years Growth: And to suppose *Animalculæ* to come to a full Growth, without Generation, is also contrary to the Course and Order of Nature.

Generation must have been from Eternity, and been the Cause, without which it would have been impossible for Animals ever to attain to their full and perfect Growth: And also, Animals at, or near their full and perfect Growth, the Cause
without

without which Generation could never have been.

I might enumerate many more Absurdities, but think these sufficient to shew the Falsity of this Opinion: And the same, or equal, will follow in relation to all Beings; but such a one as exists from Eternity to Eternity, and knows no Change. We must therefore conclude, that we are the Product of Creation, and that there is one eternal, self-existent, infinite Being, by whose Wisdom and Power we and the Worlds were made, and are preserv'd.

This being evident and indisputable, I shall advance one Argument more, in relation to our being necessary Agents, on account of our Reasoning, Willing, and Judging. Suppose the Soul incapable of Judging, entirely divested of all Thought, of all Ideas, and perfectly ignorant of what pass'd, and of all the Motions and Changes it underwent. In this case, as it could form no Judgment, it could not be necessitated by any: But would that make the Soul more free? So far from it, that it would, under these Circumstances, be divested of all Agency for want of *Thought* and *Will*, and be as much a Patient as a dead Man, or senseless Mass of Matter: For, what occurs to our Minds, that satisfies us such a Being is incapable of acting, but want of Life, Sense and Thought? If therefore Life, Sense and Thought be added, the Incapacity is taken away, and Power takes place. But, can that Power which removes the Incapacity, be at the same Time a Proof of the same Incapacity? Impossible! By way of Illustration, I will ask, Is King *Charles* the II^d's Statue, in the middle of the *Royal-Exchange*, an Agent? No: Why so? It is Lifeless, Senseless, and knows nothing: And 'tis impossible that that should be possess'd of a self motive Power, which

is under an invincible Ignorance how to direct itself. Well then, are the Merchants that walk about it Agents? No: What's the Reason? Because they have Life, Sense and Knowledge how to direct their Motions, and move accordingly. It is evident, the Reason given for one of these Negations is false; for, if the Want of Thought in a Being, is an absolute Proof of the Want of Agency; the Presence, or Possession of Thought, must take away that Want, and can't be a Proof of the same Thing.

The Author of *the philosophical Enquiry concerning human Liberty*, page 65 and 66, supposing Liberty to be defin'd, a Power to will Evil, knowing it to be Evil, as well as Good, says, that 'That would be a great Imperfection in Man, consider'd as a sensible Being; for willing Evil is choosing to be miserable, and bringing knowingly Destruction on ourselves.' As his suppos'd Definition differs from mine, I will only take notice of the Use he makes of it, in favour of Necessity. All he says, seems only to amount to this; that he thinks it a great Imperfection for Man to do Evil at all; for when a Man chooses to commit an unjust Action, for the sake of a present Pleasure, and knows it to be unjust, that is, perceives the moral Depravity of the Action and frequently is sensible of the Punishment, which generally does, and always ought, to attend such Actions; he chooses to act in such Manner, as he knows, in all Probability, will bring Misery upon him. And I can't see in what better a Condition Man is in, for being necessitated to do such Actions as bring Misery upon him; necessitated to follow Appetite, against the Warnings of Reason, to contradict the Guide of Life within him; and also, necessitated to grieve, to vex himself, and lament over his Actions, as the Product of Wicked-

Wickedness or Folly; and be hated and despis'd by others, for being necessarily guilty of them.

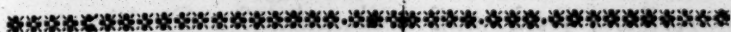
The same Author adds, "That as all human Actions have a Beginning, they must have a Cause; and every Cause must be a necessary Cause, or a Cause suited to the Effect." And from thence asserts the Necessity of all human Actions. But, allowing one original Cause, which is God; and that he has invested us with Intelligency, Appetite and Will; and several Passions, as Love, Fear, Anger, &c. with a Power to begin Motion, or Action; this explains the Cause of our Actions, without any such Consequence, proves the Cause to be in ourselves, and us to be active Beings. I have observed before, that this Gentleman has endeavour'd, from the late Bishop of Sarum, to prove God to be a necessary Agent, on account of his existing necessarily, *without a Cause*; and here he argues that *Man* is a necessary Being, because he and his Actions *have a Cause*. But this is only denying all Agency at all, which is absurd; but every thing must give way to the Doctrine of Necessity! Man is set forth to be in a wretched Condition, if he is at Liberty, or has it in his Choice to do either Good or Evil; but all is very well if he is necessitated to do Evil, and bring Misery on himself and others. Here's no Reflection against the divine Author of all Things; no speaking derogatory to his Honour, as a good Being, when the Happiness of sensible and intelligent Creatures depend on the Will he has in the Formation of Things.

We are naturally so constituted as to pursue Things which are agreeable, and shun those which are disagreeable to us. When therefore a pleasing or agreeable Object offers itself to us, it is naturally desir'd; so far Necessity takes place; we then commonly reason with ourselves, whether

ther the Action in view be proper or honest, and have a Power, whether it appears honest or not, to will and execute it. Thus when King *David* beheld *Bathsheba*, the Desire arising from the Sight of a fine Woman, which was natural to him, took place first, and as such he could not avoid it: Nor was that Desire evil in itself; but when he prosecuted that Desire, after he understood she was another Man's Property, it then became vicious: And the Reason is, because he had a Power in himself, either to will, or not to will the Prosecution of it; for there was nothing foreign to himself that constrain'd him; nothing but the Powers and Faculties of his own Mind which occasion'd that Crime, that prov'd of such mischievous and fatal Consequences, and which, in all Probability, if he had duely reflected in himself, of the Nature and Heinousness of, he had never committed: This is so evident, that the beforemention'd Author is oblig'd to allow, that Rewards and Punishments are capable of framing Men's Wills to observe, and not to transgress the Law: By which, if he means any thing, it can amount to no less than that Men have the Power of reflecting on the Nature and Consequences of Actions; of Chusing, Willing, and Executing in themselves; which is Liberty in as extensive a Sense as we can imagine.

To make an end of this Argument, drawn from the last Judgment of the Understanding, it seems to me to consist wholly in this; that a Man can't be at Liberty to act according to his Inclination or Will, and contrary to it at the same Time, agreeable to what he judges to be right, and agreeable to what he judges to be wrong. For, if a Man prefers the Doing of an Action, 'tis certainly his Inclination to do it rather than not; and 'tis impossible he should have Liberty both Ways. Again, if a
Man

Man were to commit an Action contrary to his Inclination, Judgment and Will, he would in that Case be necessitated by some other Power: Or, he would have nothing to move him, either in himself, or foreign to himself; and such an Action can't be suppos'd to happen. To prefer an Action, and do it by Reason of such Preference, is therefore so far from destroying Liberty, that it is perfectly consistent with it.



P A R T II.

Of Human Liberty, with Regard to God's Foreknowledge.

PRESCIENCE, or the *Foreknowledge* of God, comes next under Consideration. And, as I believe, that both *Predestination* and *Necessity* have arisen from the Opinion that *God being the Creator and original Author of all Things, preordain'd all the several Actions and Motions that have happen'd, or will happen*; it is absolutely necessary, before we can form a true Judgment, to examine the several Arguments proceeding from this Side of the Question. What I have yet seen, and, I believe, all that can be alledg'd, is contain'd in the following Proposition.

God being the only eternal, self-existent Being, created all other Beings, both animate and inanimate, and invested them with all the Powers and Properties they now enjoy; and consequently is the original and absolute Cause of all other Causes and their Effects. And as he is infinite in Wisdom, as well as Power, he perfectly knew, or foresaw from Eternity, all the Effects

Effects every Being and Cause would produce ; and consequently whatever happens in Nature, must be according to his full, perfect and eternal Idea of all Things ; and must necessarily come to pass, as the Effect of his Will primarily. We are therefore deceiv'd when we call Actions good or evil, or attribute 'em to ourselves ; we being only Instruments in God's Hand, to bring about certain Things in the Way of his Providence.

I. In the first Place it is alledg'd, *That God, being perfectly good, must will and design Good in every Thing he brings to pass ; and must always will and design, that all his Creatures should do that which was proper and right: But if he should give to any Creature free Agency, or Power to chuse and act, either what is Good or what is Evil, such a Creature, having the Power to chuse Evil, has a Power to thwart the Designs of the Creator.*

1. *Good and Evil are us'd so loosely and equivocally by the Necessitarians, that 'tis frequently hard to judge what they intend by those Terms. But in whatever Sense they are us'd in this Argument, the Consequence does not follow. For, if God bestow'd free Agency on any of his Creatures, no doubt but he perceiv'd it was best so to do ; and that the Mistakes and ill Uses which the Creature might be liable to, in the Exercise of it, would be over-balanc'd by the Good flowing from it : Therefore, this is only deciding positively, that it was impossible for God to have any good End or Design in forming a free Agent.*

2. *If there is no such Thing as Evil in the World as Things are, I defy any one to define what Evil is, or give any Account what he means by such a Word : And admitting free Agency, in the most extensive Sense, it can justly be us'd in, it is almost impossible to imagine there should be great-*

er. Moral Enormities then are committed, moral Evil must therefore either be the Effect of Man's Agency, or it must be agreeable to the will of God; and consequently he can't be a morally good Being.

3. *Thwarting the Designs of the Creator* seems to imply, that God has given a Power to the Creature, which he can neither recall nor govern: That he has weaken'd and divested himself of Part of his Power, and sees Things frequently done against his Mind, which he cannot now help. But I know none that ever yet carry'd Agency in Creatures to such a Height. God's Power is infinite, ours finite: And 'tis impossible he should lessen or diminish his Power which is infinite, by communicating a finite Power to us his Creatures; any more than he should lessen or diminish his infinite Wisdom, by communicating a Power of Thinking, Judging and Reasoning in a finite Degree.

4. It seems therefore most reasonable to conclude, that notwithstanding God foresaw that Man would be liable frequently to make an evil or immoral Use of his Abilities, yet he communicated to him a Power of Agency, as the greater Good, than his being perfectly a Patient would have been, and those Immoralities never happen'd.

II. It is said, *That God is the only eternal Agent in the Universe; and consequently must know, whatever Actions would be, they being all absolutely his own Production, according to his own eternal Idea, which is suitable to his infinite Knowledge or Omniscience: But, admitting he has bestow'd Agency on any of his Creatures, is to suppose them not confin'd in their Actions, and God can't be certain of what he has put in the Power of another, nor know what Use will be made of that Power: Which is to suppose him ignorant of some Events, and is not equal and suitable to his infinite Wisdom and Foreknowledge.*

1. I answer, that we cannot have a more full and perfect Idea of what is equal and suitable to God's infinite Wisdom and Foreknowledge, than his beholding at one intuitive View, all the Acts of his Providence, all that may properly be said to be his own Acts, from Eternity to Eternity: Which Idea is as well preserv'd by the Supposition of Liberty or Agency in Creatures, as Necessity. For *Necessity* teaches, *that God is the only Agent in the Universe; and consequently cannot foresee any Action, but what he himself designs, wills and executes.* And *Liberty* allows, *that he perfectly knew from Eternity all his own Actions, and whatever he will'd or design'd to bring to pass in the Course of his Providence; with this Addition, that he likewise knew he had Power to communicate Power or Agency to a Creature, in a finite Degree, and that he will'd and executed it.* Hence it is plain, that Liberty does not suppose him less knowing than Necessity does, but more powerful. For we may with as much Justice assert, that if God had not a Power to communicate Agency to a Creature, he was not infinite in Power: As that because having communicated such a Power, and consequently not knowing every simple and particular Event, which would happen in the Use of that Power, he was not infinite in Knowledge; since the Idea of his Wisdom is not lessen'd thereby. Liberty therefore does not in the least destroy the Idea of eternal Omniscience, suitable and equal to an infinite Being; but gives us a more perfect and suitable Idea of Omnipotence.

2. But if it be granted, *that God did foresee and ordain all Actions from Eternity; and consequently the Murder of Abel, and had a perfect and adequate Idea of that Action and Suffering from Eternity; I must question, whether he had the same Idea of Pain that Abel had, when he felt it?*

Or

Or the same Ideas of Fear, Confusion and Guilt, which *Cain* was conscious of, after he had committed that Murder? This, I believe, when well consider'd, will generally be deny'd. For as those Ideas could not be the same and different; to have the same Idea of Pain, God must feel Pain; which to assert would be speaking highly unworthy of the divine Being. It is agreed, both by Philosophers and Divines, that he is without Parts or Passions: He can't therefore be sensible in himself of the Ideas of Love, Fear, Anger, &c. and they are never attributed to him but figuratively. And to say, that he beheld from Eternity the Ideas of Love, Fear, Anger or Guilt, as they were to be, and are in *us*, is to assert, that he had those very Ideas in himself; which is absurd. And this does not in the least derogate from his infinite Wisdom and Excellency: For as it would be no valuable Addition to Man, as a reasonable Creature, to be subjected to the same Ideas which Brutes have; so, to suppose the Deity subjected to Passions, would highly ~~degrade~~ ^{degrade} from that Idea of Perfection we ought to conceive of him. No doubt, but he beheld from Eternity, as I have already said, all the Actions of his Providence, and every Creature that he should bring into Being, and beheld that they were Good; that is, the Powers and Properties which he would bestow upon them were proper and suitable for them. The Arguments therefore drawn from Prescience, in favour of Necessity, when fully examin'd, are more popular than solid: And what appears at first View to be absurd vanishes; and we are satisfy'd, that the Designs, Foreknowledge and Ideas of God are equal and suitable to his own infinite Perfections.

Having so far clear'd the Point, relating to God's Foreknowledge, let us now consider, whe-

ther a Supposition of Agency, or self-motive Power in Mankind, be not the only Way to account for their Actions being as they are, and their being affected with or concern'd for them in the Manner they are. In order to which I shall lay down the following Propositions.

I. That God, being infinite in Wisdom, cannot be suppos'd to do any thing without a sufficient Reason.

II. That, being perfectly good and just, he can't be suppos'd to have made any of his Creatures with an Intent they should be miserable, or oblige them to do those Things which shall bring Unhappiness upon them.

III. That God can't be suppos'd to contradict himself, nor his Actions, admit of any Absurdity, or Disagreement with the eternal Excellency of his Nature.

As these Propositions are too evident to be disputed, they being founded on the Perfection of the Nature and Attributes of God, let us therefore immediately apply 'em to our present Subject.

Except we allow of Man's Agency, what reason can be given for his being conscious of Guilt? Why should a Man for some rash Action be, whenever that Action comes before his Memory, under great Agonies and Torment of Mind, if he can neither in reality forward nor abstain from any Action? To say, this Consciousness of the Goodness or Wickedness of his Actions may be a Means to spur him on to Action, or deter him from it, is playing between Liberty and Necessity, and keeping close to neither. For if every Action, which we call wicked, that comes to pass, was fix'd and unavoidable, and the Person, appointed to commit that Action, under an Impossibility of refraining from it, his Thoughts or Judgment of it can't in reality either deter

or

or spur him on. For Instance, suppose my Watch to be a conscious Being, and sensible of its Motions, and had an Opinion that it mov'd itself; 'tis plain, its knowing when it went wrong, and being made conscious of Guilt, and uneasy for it, would not in the least contribute to alter its Motions, unless it were endow'd with Self-Motion. Of what Use therefore could Consciousness be to a Creature thus form'd? This must be the Case, if absolute Necessity governs, and every particular Action is preordain'd and fix'd, both as to the Nature and Manner of it. We are told indeed, by the Author of the *Philosophical Enquiry*, 'That 'tis possible, when a Man has committed Evil, through the Strength of Temptation, he, not being able to overcome it, may, after the Pleasure of the Sin is over, condemn himself for acting contrary to his Conscience.' But how came the Man to act contrary to his Conscience? Why, he was preordain'd and necessitated so to do, and could not possibly either refrain from Action, or do otherwise. Of what Use then was his Conscience, or the Knowledge of Good and Evil to him? I believe 'twill be hard to make any other Reply, than that it was to be a continual Plague and Torment to him.

The same Author, explaining what he meant by Necessity, says, 'Man is a necessary Agent, if all his Actions are so determin'd by the Causes preceeding each Action, that not one past Action could possibly not have come to pass, or have been otherwise than it was: Nor one future Action can possibly not come to pass, or be otherwise than it shall be. He is a free Agent, if he is able, at any Time, under the Circumstances and Causes he then is in, to do different Things, or (says he) in other Words, if he is not ever unavoidably determin'd, in every

' every Point of Time, by the Circumstances he
 ' is in, and Causes he is under, to do any other.'
 But, at the latter end of his Book, he declares,
that Man has a Liberty to do as he wills, or pleases.
 This, I confess, I know not how to reconcile,
 otherwise than by supposing, that the Circumstan-
 ces Men are in, and the Causes they are under,
 are, several of them, of their own Creation: Which
 is a really supposing Agency; or, if you please,
 free Agency, viz. Men's Wills are of their own
 framing, and their Resolutions to act this or that
 Thing in their own Power. For I never heard
 X any contend, that a Man was at Liberty both to
 will and refuse the same Thing at the same Time.
 But, if all those Circumstances and Causes were
 impos'd by some other Power, it will at last center
 in the divine Being: And then it will follow,
 that every Sense of Pleasure, let it be never so
 ridiculous, every Folly we are made to commit,
 as well as every Outrage, are his wise and just
 Determinations: That Morality is a Bubble, and
 Vertue a meer empty Name. For we are neces-
 sitated by the Circumstances we are in, and Cau-
 ses we are under, (which are arbitrarily impos'd
 upon us) to be pleas'd with, and do all those Acti-
 ons, be they moral, or immoral. To mention se-
 condary Causes does not alter the Case; for all se-
 condary Causes are but so many Steps or Links to
 the original Cause, which here is suppos'd to be the
 only Agent, and *those* only acted upon. Therefore,
 Angels and Men are no more than *conscious Clocks*
and Watches; and Guilt, Terror, Shame, &c, can
 be of no use, to regulate their Motions or Actions
 by, without a self-motive Power in themselves.

What is still more amazing, this Gentleman
 tells us, ' That if Man was not a *necessary* Agent,
 ' determin'd by Pleasure and Pain, there would
 ' be no Foundation for Rewards and Punishments.'

I will

I will venture to say, that if this had been said by some of the antient Philosophers or Poets, the Criticks would have taken the Liberty to conclude the Text was corrupted, and ought to have been, *if Man was not a voluntary Agent, affected by Pleasure and Pain, there would be no Foundation for Rewards and Punishments.* For who would imagine, that any one, in a philosophical and moral Discourse, should use Words so equivocally and opposite to Reason? It being natural for every little Child, to think himself unjustly punish'd for what he cannot help. And a necessary Agent, determin'd as aforesaid, can mean no less, if it be said, that voluntarily determin'd, and necessarily determin'd, are not opposites; for we may will by Necessity. I ask, if the Will is always as necessarily exerted, if every Thing that seems to look like Action in the Soul is as necessarily produc'd, as Breathing, or the Motion of the Blood in most Animals? If it be answer'd in the affirmative; then I say, that Rewards and Punishments can be of no more Service in determining Men's Wills, either to Good or Evil, to moral and real Good and Evil, than a Fever can be of, to make the Blood take care of its own Motions, to regulate 'em, and thereby render the Body more healthful. Nor could there be more Robbers, Murderers, Whoremongers, or other Criminals, than God has appointed; provided there were no Rewards promis'd, nor Punishments threatned: Nor could Societies be fill'd with more Disorders, than were intended. For absolute Necessity is as absolute a Restraint, as can possibly be conceiv'd in our Minds. Punishments threaten'd, or Rewards promis'd, under such an absolute and eternal Destiny, are therefore altogether unreasonable. And Pleasure or Pain, Guilt or Justification, accompanying our necessary Motions, are the most egregious Banter upon us imaginable. If

If therefore the Terror or Punishments, or Desire of Rewards, be capable of framing Men's Minds to Good; that is, if Men have a Power in themselves to seek after Rewards, and shun Punishments; such a Necessity must be false. And notwithstanding this Author's Declaration, respecting voluntary Liberty, he frequently expresses himself in favour of absolute Necessity, particularly in * his Definition before recited, and where † he approves of the *Stoicks*; and of the *Pharisees* and *Essenes*; who (he tells us) held, *that Fate and God did all*; who ascrib'd *all Things to Fate, or to God's Appointment*; and who were *Afferters of absolute Fate and Necessity*, &c. Again || in his Arguments from Prescience, and his ‡ justifying the Punishment of Murder, and other Crimes, by considering the Criminals *as canker'd Branches, or mad Dogs; furious Madmen, or Men infected with the Plague*, and many more. All which, whatever Service he intended them for, I am afraid will prove of no Use towards framing Men's Minds to Vertue, or the Observance of the Laws. The Belief that we are necessitated to do bad as well as good Actions, naturally tending to make Men careless about their Actions, must be destructive of Morality. Such a Doctrine can serve only to destroy the Idea of God's Goodness, in the Minds of Men: To perswade 'em, that he deals with 'em after an arbitrary and unreasonable Manner: That Good and Evil are empty Sounds; and is the profess'd Maxim of the *Necessitarians*, that there is neither Merit nor demerit in Creatures.

Of Religion, the nearest and strictest Relation between us and God, what shall we say? Is it the Effect of Necessity? Has God necessarily determin'd us to be of such or such a Religion, or of any, or none? It must be so, or we are Agents;
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* *Phil. Enq.* p. 11. † Pag. 60, 61. || Pag. 82. ‡ Pag. 92

we not being able to form one Thought ourselves, without some Degree of Agency. An universal Inspiration must be allow'd, and such an one as was intended and determin'd from Eternity. God therefore must be the only Author of *all* Religion, or *whatever* carries the Name of Religion, as well as Action. For what Reason has he introduc'd such Notions into the Mind of Man? Can Man be better'd by 'em? No; not unless he be an Agent. Can God receive any Benefit thereby? Impossible! for that would argue a Want in God. What Reason then can be given? I believe it will be hard to tell; unless it be, to make Mankind more miserable than they would have been without it, which can be no sufficient Reason in God.

Religion, taken according to the Doctrine of Necessity, being the Plant of God, which he forcibly and irresistably implants in the Minds of Men, in what Manner he pleases; Man being absolutely a Patient, utterly incapable of producing one Thought or Action himself; it follows, all Religions are equally good, being all equally the Act of God upon the Minds of Men. Hence, there ought to be but one Religion; that is, no one Man's Religion ought to vary from, or be contrary to, another's; for otherwise, God would contradict in one Man, what he teaches in another. It also proves, that God taught the old Heathens, or inspir'd their Minds with the Notion of Multiplicity of Gods; and the *Jews*, that the Heathen Worship was Idolatry, and a worshipping of Devils, and that they should worship but one God. That the Custom of sacrificing Children to *Moloch*, or whatever appears barbarous to Reason and Humanity, were really the very Acts commanded, and the very Manner of Worship, establish'd and enforc'd by God amongst the Nations where they were practis'd; and were as ac-

ceptable to him, as the most compassionate and charitable Actions were. God has therefore formerly said to one People, *I the Lord thy God am ONE God, thou shalt have no other Gods but me. Thou shalt not bow down to them, nor worship them. And to others at the same Time, Jupiter, Apollo, &c. shall be your Gods. You shall worship Gods and Goddeses. You shall build Altars, and offer up your innocent Children to appease their Fury. And in these latter Times has taught, that it was necessary to believe the Principles and Doctrines of Christ and his Apostles; that it was the last Dispensation, and should stand forever; but has introduc'd it with such Confusion and Diversity, that it is quite a different Kind of Religion in one Country, to what it is in another. He has also more lately, in Asia, Africa, and Part of Europe, impos'd Mahomet as the last great Prophet, come with Fire and Sword to reconcile the World to the Truth: And yet has obliged the greatest Part of Europe, to believe that Mahomet is an Imposter, and a wicked Deluder of those Nations who believ'd in him. But a yet greater Contradiction is, that God has in every Country enforc'd what Religion was best there, and absolutely necessary to procure his Favour; when he knew that none of them were necessary, nor of any Manner of Service, either to the People, or himself: And,*

Persecution will still more abundantly shew the unreasonable, arbitrary and contradictory Manner, in which the Parent of all Good! the Essence of Truth! has acted, in Relation to his Creatures; supposing as aforesaid, that Man is necessarily determin'd by him from Eternity, to do every Thing he does: That he is only a Patient, and acted upon. I never knew one of the Believers in absolute Necessity, but who would
condemn

condemn Persecution, as cruel in itself, and contrary to the very End it is pretended to answer. But however contrary to right Reason, however mischievous in its Effects, however fatal and destructive to the Quiet and Happiness of Mankind, *this* may be, yet *this* also is the Child of God! He it is, who inspires Men with Zeal, who commands, nay, enforces them, for the Honour and Glory of his Name, to kill, burn and destroy all before them, in order to propagate *one Sett* of Principles! He, at the same Time, inspires his Saints and Martyrs, (as we fondly call them) to undergo all Kinds of Torments, rather than renounce *another Sett* of Principles, which they have receiv'd by his Inspiration, and which he has impress'd on their Minds for Truth. They are equally compell'd by him, *one* to *inflict*, and the *other* to *suffer* whatever is most grievous to human Nature: And can these be the Works of God? God forbid!

To conclude, as I apprehend these will be found to be Consequences, certainly and unavoidably attending the *Doctrine of Necessity*, let every one therefore judge, whether *this*, or the Doctrine of Liberty, is most agreeable to Truth, to the Perfections of an infinitely wise, just, powerful and good Being, and to the Nature of Things; which is most adapted to the Good and Happiness of reasonable Creatures, to have a Power communicated to them, to begin Motion, to begin Action, to chuse, to will, and to do; and to have certain and unalterable Laws promulgated to them, in their own Minds, of the moral Rectitude or Depravity of most of the Actions they are fitted to perform, and have an Inclination to do, their Misery or Happiness depending on their own Choice, Will and Actions; or for Men to be necessitated in all Things, to be meer conscious Machines,

36 *A Vindication of, &c.*

chines, and their Consciouſness of Good or Evil Arbitrarily impos'd upon them; that they are no more than necessary Agents, and necessarily move in every step they take, in comparing their Ideas; and that every Discovery and Demonstration, physical, mathematical or moral, is arbitrarily impos'd on their Minds; that even God himself, is a necessary Agent, and had not Power to move or act, but as he was determin'd by Fate, or Necessity of Nature. This, unless well explain'd, some would think to be a supposing no Agent at all; but as it may serve the Cause at other Times it is asserted, that he is an Agent, and the only Agent, who from Eternity did, and does move, every Wheel of Action, both to what we call morally good, and what we call morally evil; that he has nevertheless implanted in us a Consciouſness of Guilt, in doing Things contrary to his Will, contrary to the Designs he form'd us for, with Terror and Misery annex'd; and a Consciouſness of Justification; in acting agreeably to his Will, with Rewards and Happiness promised. And this, while he is the Actor himself, and we but Instruments in his Hands, irresistibly moved, in every the minutest Circumstance, that he has, among different Men, and in different Nations, taught Principles, or instill'd 'em into the Minds of Men, which contradict one another; and can serve to no other End or Purpose, than only to make the rational Part of his Creatures miserable. In a Word, that there can be no Contradiction in Nature, no Weakness in Nature, no Immorality, or what we call Wickedness in Nature, nor Folly, but what must proceed from, and be the real Acts of, the eternal, uniform, omnipotent, infinitely good, just and wise Being.

F I N I S.

